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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 ACDA-07 ERDA-05 OES-07
SIL-01 EB-07 LAB-04 COME-00 /102 W
----------141145Z 117410 /40
R 131753Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8266
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION NATO
AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL STUTTGART

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 08324

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, GW
SUBJECT: GERMAN POLITICAL REACTIONS TO THE LONDON MEETINGS

REF: BONN 7957

BEGIN SUMMARY: POLITICAL REACTION IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC TO THE LONDON MEETINGS HAS BEEN EXTREMELY FAVORABLE. OPPOSITION POLITICIANS (IN PRIVATE) AND GOVERNMENT POLITICIANS (IN PUBLIC) CONSIDER THE MEETINGS CONFIDENTIAL

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A POLITICAL TRIUMPH BOTH FOR PRESIDENT CARTER AND FOR CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT. SCHMIDT CAME BACK FROM THE MEETINGS BUOYANT AND IN BETTER FORM THAN HE HAS BEEN IN MONTHS. WHILE HE KNOWS HE CAN NOT SOLVE THE NAGGING POLITICAL PROBLEMS AT HOME THROUGH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES, THE LONDON MEETINGS GAVE HIM AND THE COALITION A PSYCHOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL BOOST. END SUMMARY.

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1. POLITICIANS IN THE GOVERNMENT AND IN THE OPPOSITION SHARE THE ASSESSMENT THAT THE LONDON MEETINGS WERE A POLITICAL SUCCESS FOR BOTH PRESIDENT CARTER AND CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT. THE CHANCELLOR HAS NOT HAD SUCH GOOD PRESS IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS AND HIS TRIUMPH CAME AT A TIME WHEN HE AND THE GOVERNMENT WERE IN NEED OF SOMETHING TO PICK UP THE COALITION'S SAGGING FORTUNES.

2. EVEN CRITICS OF SCHMIDT HAVE TOLD US PRIVATELY THAT THEY THOUGHT HE HANDLED THE MEETINGS IN LONDON, ESPECIALLY HIS MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT, MASTERFULLY. THEY FEEL, HOWEVER, THAT THE POLITICAL ADVANTAGE HE GAINED FROM THE MEETINGS WILL BE TEMPORARY AND THAT HE HAS YET TO FACE UP TO THE REALLY DIFFICULT DOMESTIC POLITICAL PROBLEMS.

3. SOME GERMAN POLITICIANS HAVE TOLD US THAT THE CARTER-SCHMIDT MEETING CONFIRMED THE GERMAN VIEW THAT A COMPROMISE SOLUTION WAS POSSIBLE IN SOLVING THE PROBLEM BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OVER THE FRG-BRAZIL NUCLEAR AGREEMENTS.

4. PRESIDENT CARTER'S SPEECH AT THE NATO SUMMIT AND THE FOUR POWER STATEMENT ON BERLIN WERE PARTICULARLY APPRECIATED BY GERMAN POLITICIANS. SOME GERMAN POLITICIANS FEARED THAT THE NEW AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION MIGHT BE LESS COMMITTED TO THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE THAN ITS PREDECESSORS. THE PRESIDENT'S PERFORMANCE AT THE LONDON MEETINGS HAS GONE A LONG WAY TOWARDS DISPELLING
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THESE DOUBTS.

5. BEFORE THE LONDON SUMMIT, SCHMIDT WAS IN A MOOD OF DEEP DEPRESSION. THE OUTCOME OF THE LONDON MEETINGS GAVE HIM A NEEDED PSYCHOLOGICAL BOOST. ONE FDP POLITICIAN TOLD US THAT AFTER SCHMIDT'S TRIP TO LONDON HE VISITED THE CHANCELLOR'S HOUSE FOR A COALITION MEETING. WHEN HE ENTERED, HE HEARD SOMEONE PLAYING A LIVELY TUNE ON THE PIANO. HE LOOKED INTO THE ROOM AND THERE WAS THE CHANCELLOR POUNDING AWAY AT THE KEYBOARD. THE CHANCELLOR LOOKED UP, SMILED AND SAID: "THINGS ARE REALLY GOING WELL NOW." SUCH A SCENE WOULD HAVE BEEN IMPOSSIBLE TO IMAGINE JUST A FEW SHORT WEEKS AGO.

6. OF COURSE, ONE SWALLOW DOES NOT MAKE A SPRING AND SCHMIDT'S SUCCESS AT THE SUMMIT WILL NOT SOLVE SUCH THORNY DOMESTIC POLITICAL PROBLEMS AS UNEMPLOYMENT AND SOARING SOCIAL WELFARE COSTS. HOWEVER, THIS RAY OF SUNSHINE AFTER MONTHS OF GLOOM COULD NOT BUT HELP THE

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